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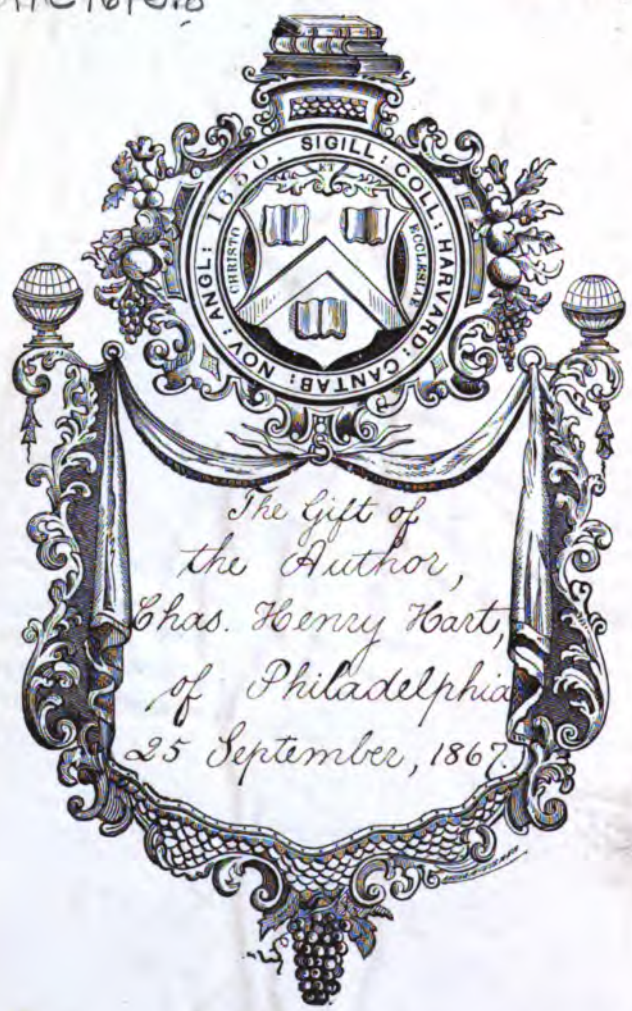
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*Harvard College*  
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## HISTORICAL SKETCH

OF THE

# NATIONAL MEDALS

ISSUED PURSUANT TO

RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, 1776-1815.

A PAPER READ BEFORE

"The Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia,"

THURSDAY EVENINGS, NOVEMBER 1 AND 15, 1866.

BY

CHARLES H. HART,

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY.

PHILADELPHIA:

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## NATIONAL MEDALS.

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I PROPOSE to read before the Society this evening, a brief memoir of the National Medals awarded by Congress during the Revolutionary War, the *quasi* French War, and the War of 1812. This idea suggested itself to me, by reading in the *Evening Bulletin* last week, an article copied from the *New York Sun*, on this same subject; but this article was so full of blunders and gross and ridiculous errors, that it was calculated more to mislead than to direct any one in the pursuit of their investigations. They number forty-one.

The medals of the Revolution were all struck in France, and at the time they were issued, the French Government presented a series in silver to General Washington, which series it is said, after his decease, were offered for sale and purchased by Daniel Webster? So highly esteemed were these records of the Revolution, that about the year 1791, an enterprising Jew in London, by the name of Hyams, who had seen them, cut at his own expense dies of several, and executed copies in copper, which were sold as genuine. The copper medals of Washington, Howard and William Washington, had their origin in this forgery.

By a resolution of Congress, March 25, 1776, the first National Medal was presented to General Washington, on the occasion of the evacuation of Boston by the British troops in that year. Also a vote of thanks was passed to him, and the officers and soldiers under his command, for their wise and spirited conduct in the seige and acquisition of the city. The size of this medal according to the scale adopted by this Society would be 42, and bears on the

*Obverse.* Undraped bust of Washington facing to the right.

*Legend.* GEORGIO WASHINGTON SUPREMO DVCI EXERCITIVVM  
ADSSERTORI LIBERTATIS. Beneath is inscribed, COMITIA AMERI-



CANA. The name of the engraver, *Du Vivier, Paris, F.*, appears beneath the bust.

*Reverse.* In the background appears the city of Boston which the British troops are evacuating and retiring to their shipping. To the right are the American intrenchments, with the troops drawn up in front ready to march into the city. In the foreground on Dorchester Heights, is Washington and his staff mounted; on the ground are cannon and cannon balls.

*Legend.* HOSTIBUS PRIMO FUGATIS. *Exergue.* BOSTONIUM RECUPERATUM XVII MARTII MDCCLXXVI.

The line of ownership of this most interesting memorial of the Father of our Country, I have been unable to trace, only that about two years since there appeared in the columns of the *Evening Bulletin*, the following paragraph: "*A Precious Relic.*—The only gold medal ever voted by Congress to General Washington is for sale, its owner, who has lost by the war everything else that is valuable, being compelled to part with it. It was given in honor of the evacuation of Boston by the British. On the obverse is a fine medallion profile of Washington, and on the reverse he and his staff are grouped on Bunker's Hill, while the British fleet is seen moving down the bay. It contains \$180 worth of gold. It is in perfect preservation, having been guarded by its owner with the most religious care. Five thousand dollars have been offered for it; but to the Government or to a Historical Society, it would be worth much more. We shall be glad to give further information concerning it to parties that may desire it." I made no inquiries about it at the time, and now all recollection of it has been lost.

The next medal presented by Congress was to General Wayne, familiarly known as "Mad Anthony," for his famous attack and capture of Stony Point on the 15th of July, 1779. By the journals of Congress it appears that the attack was ordered by General Washington on the 10th of July, and on the morning of the 15th Wayne issued his orders, and on the night of the same day the attack was successfully made. Eleven days afterwards, or on the 26th, Congress passed a vote

of thanks to General Wayne, and the officers and soldiers under his command, particularly mentioning Colonel De Fleury and Major Stewart who led the attacking columns, and Lieutenants Gibbons and Knox, who, under a severe fire, destroyed the double row of *abatis*. Gibbons and Knox were promoted, and a gold medal was ordered to be presented to General Wayne, and silver ones to Colonel De Fleury and Major Stewart. The

*Obverse* of the Wayne medal bears an Indian queen, holding in her left hand a mural crown towards General Wayne, while with her right she is presenting him with a wreath of laurel. General Wayne holds his chapeau in his left hand, and is receiving the wreath with his right. At the feet of the queen an alligator is stretched out, resting upon which is a shield bearing the arms of the United States, and from under her feet appears a bow. *Legend.* ANTONIO WAYNE DUCI EXERCITUS. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA. *Gatteaux.*

*Reverse.* A double turreted fort upon an eminence, with troops advancing in front and rear up the hill in Indian file to storm it. Another party is being led, with charged bayonets, over *abatis* in the foreground in pursuit of a retreating enemy. Ships are in sight upon the river, and troops are advancing along the shore. *Legend.* STONY POINT EXPUGNATUM. *Exergue.* XV JUL., MDCCLXXIX. *Gatteaux.* It is size 34.

The size of the De Fleury medal is 29, and has for its

*Obverse.* A soldier helmeted standing among the ruins of a fort trampling upon a flag with his right foot, the staff of which he holds in his left hand. In his right hand, which is extended, he carries a naked sword. *Legend.* VIRTUTIS ET AUDACIÆ MONUM, ET PRÆMIUM. *Exergue.* D. DE FLEURY EQUITI GALLO PRIMO SUPER MUROS RESP. AMERIC. D. D. *Du Vivier, S.*

*Reverse.* A fort with two turrets and a flag flying upon a hill overlooking the river below, upon which vessels are visible. At the left base of the hill are two water batteries, one of which is being discharged. *Legend.* AGGERES PALUDES HOSTES VICTI. *Exergue.* STONY-PT. EXPUGN. XV JUL., MDCCLXXIX.

The third medal struck under the resolution of July 26, 1779, was for Major John Stewart.

*Obverse.* America personified in an Indian queen, is presenting a palm branch to Major Stewart; a quiver hangs at her back; her bow and an alligator at her feet; with her left hand she sustains a shield resting upon the ground and bearing the American arms. *Legend.* JOANNI STEWART COHORTIS PRÆFECTO. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA. *Gatteaux.*

*Reverse,* very much like the reverse of the Wayne medal, with the exception that the leader of the second party is the most prominent figure. *Legend.* STONY POINT OPPUGNATUM. *Exergue.* XV JUL., MDCCLXXIX. *Gatteaux.* Size 34.

The fifth medal was a gold one presented to Major Henry Lee, nick-named Light Horse Harry, by resolution of Congress passed September 24, 1779, "for the remarkable prudence, address and bravery displayed by him in his attack upon a body of British troops and the fort at Paulus Hook," now Jersey City, "on the 19th of August, 1779."

*Obverse.* Profile bust of Major Lee in regimentals. *Legend.* HENRICO LEE LEGIONIS EQUIT. PRÆFECTO. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA.

*Reverse.* A wreath of oak and olive leaves. *Legend.* NON OBSTANTIB. FLUMINIBUS, VALLIS, ASTUTIA ET VIRTUTE BELLICA, PARVA MANU HOSTE VICIT VICTOSQ. ARMIS HUMANITATE DIVINXIT. IN MEM. PUGN. AD PAULUS HOOK. DIE XIX AUG., 1779. Size 36.

By resolution of Congress of November 4, 1779, a gold medal was ordered to be struck and presented to General Gates, in commemoration of the surrender of Lieutenant-General Burgoyne and his army at Saratoga, October, 1777. This is not the place nor have I the desire, to enter into an argument on the subject, whether General Gates was exactly the proper officer to receive a medal commemorating this important event in our Revolutionary history. *Sufficit* to say that all close students of our country's annals about this time, will well know the just claims of General Philip Schuyler to that opening cloud in the dark days of our first struggle for freedom.

*Obverse.* Head of General Gates in profile. *Legend.* HORATIO GATES DUCI STRENUO. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA. Name of the engraver *N. Gatteaux*, below the bust.

*Reverse.* General Burgoyne, in front of his troops who are grounding their arms and laying down their colors, is represented in the act of surrendering his sword to General Gates, at the head of the American line with their arms shouldered and their colors advanced. To the side of the commanders are a drum and colors. *Legend.* SALUS REGIONUM SEPTENTRIONAL. *Exergue.* POSTE AD SARATOGAM IN PEDITIO. ACCEPTO DIE XVII. OCT., MDCCLXXVII. Size 34.

By a vote of Congress 3d of November, 1780, "a silver medal or shield was ordered to be struck and presented to John Paulding, David Williams and Isaac Van Wart, who intercepted Major John Andre, in the character of a spy, and notwithstanding the large bribes offered them for his release, nobly disdaining to sacrifice their country for the sake of gold, secured and conveyed him to the commanding officer of the district, whereby the conspiracy of Benedict Arnold was brought to light, the insidious designs of the enemy baffled, and the United States rescued from impending danger." A pension of two hundred dollars annually during life was also bestowed on each of them. These medals were not struck but chased.

*Obverse.* A raised shield surrounded by branches of laurel and palm. *Legend.* FIDELITY.

*Reverse.* A wreath formed of palm branches enclosing a blank for the insertion of the name of the recipient. *Legend.* VINCIT AMOR PATRIÆ. Size 26 by 34.

On the 17th of January, 1781, was fought the celebrated battle of the Cowpens, in which eighty cavalry and two hundred and thirty-seven infantry of the United States, and five hundred and fifty-three Southern militia, obtained a complete victory over a select and well appointed detachment of more than eleven hundred British regulars, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Bannister Tarlton. On the following 9th of March, Congress resolved to present to General Daniel Morgan a gold medal, and to Colonels John Egar Howard and William Augus-

tine Washington, silver ones, in honor of this victory, in which they all participated.

The medal to Morgan has for the

*Obverse.* An Indian queen with a quiver on her back, in the act of crowning an officer with a laurel wreath; his hand resting on his sword; a cannon lying on the ground with an American shield resting against it; various military weapons and implements in the background. *Legend.* DANIELI MORGAN DUCI EXERCITUS. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA. *Dupre, F.*

*Reverse.* A mounted officer leading his troops who carry the American colors, in pursuit of a retreating enemy bearing the British flag. In the background a general engagement is taking place, and in front a personal combat between an unhorsed dragoon and a foot soldier. *Legend.* VICTORIA LIBERTATIS VINDEX. *Exergue.* FVGATIS CAPTIS AUT CAESIS AD COWPENS HOSTIBVS. XVII JAN., MDCCLXXXI. *Dupre inv. et f.* Size 36.

The medal to Colonel Howard is

*Obverse.* A mounted officer pursuing and about to strike down with his uplifted sword a retreating foot soldier bearing a stand of colors. Between them victory is descending holding in her right hand a wreath of laurel over the officer's head, and in her left a palm branch. *Legend.* JOH. EGAR. HOWARD LEGIONIS PEDITUM PRÆFECTO. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA. *Duviv.*

*Reverse.* A laurel wreath. *Legend.* QUOD IN NUTANTEM HOSTIUM ACIEM SUBITO IRRUENS PRÆCLARUM BELLICÆ VIRTUTIS SPECIMEN DEDIT IN PUGNA AD COWPENS. XVII JAN., MDCCLXXXI. Size 30.

The last one of the Cowpen medals has

*Obverse.* An officer mounted at the head of a body of cavalry, charging flying troops; Victory holding a laurel crown in her right hand and a palm branch in her left, hovers over the heads of the pursuing party. *Legend.* GULIELMO WASHINGTON LEGIONIS EQUIT. PRÆFECTO. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA. *Duv.* (Name of the engraver, Duvivier?)

*Reverse.* A laurel wreath. *Legend.* QUOD PARVA MILITUM MANU STRENUÉ PROSECUTUS HOSTES VIRTUTIS INGENITÆ PRÆ-

CLARUM SPECIMEN DEDIT IN PUGNA AD COWPENS. XVII JAN.,  
MDCCLXXXI. Size 28.

The last military medal presented during the Revolution, was a gold one to General Nathaniel Greene, according to Act of Congress, passed October 29, 1781, for his gallant conduct at the battle of Eutaw Springs, South Carolina, September 8, 1781.

*Obverse.* Profile head of General Greene in uniform. *Legend.* NATHANIEL GREEN EGREGIO DUCL. COMITIA AMERICANA.

*Reverse.* Victory, bearing in her left hand a palm branch and holding in her upraised right a wreath of laurel, is in the act of alighting upon the earth stepping on a broken shield, beneath and about which another shield, broken arms, a laurel branch and colors are lying. *Dupre.* *Legend.* SALUS REGIONUM AUSTRALIUM. *Exergue.* HOSTIBUS AD EUTAW DEBELLATIS DIE VIII. SEPT., MDCCLXXXI. Size 36.

Here ends the series of medals awarded to officers of the army for meritorious actions during that long struggle, which finally ended with the bonds being broken forever, which bound us to our mother country; and indeed but one more remains of any kind, that to Captain John Paul Jones, for his capture of the Serapis of 44 guns, commanded by Captain Pearson, by the Bon Homme Richard of 40 guns, on the 23d of September, 1779, after a very severe engagement by moonlight, of four hours duration, in which Jones lost his ship and 132 men killed and wounded. On receiving the intelligence of this brave action, Congress passed resolutions complimenting its hero, and six years later, on October 16, 1787, came to the following:

*Resolved.* That the Congress entertain a high sense of the distinguished bravery and military conduct of John Paul Jones, Esq., Captain in the Navy of the United States, and particularly in his victory over the British frigate Serapis, on the coast of England, which was attended with circumstances so brilliant as to excite general applause and admiration.

*Resolved.* That a *gold medal* be struck and presented to the Chevalier Paul Jones, in commemoration of the valor and bril-

liant services of that officer; and that the Hon. Mr. Jefferson, Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at the court of Versailles, have the same executed in France with proper devices.

The medal above alluded to is

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Jones. *Legend.* JOANNI PAVLO JONES CLASSIS PRÆFECTO. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA.

*Reverse.* A representation of the engagement between the Bon Homme Richard and the Serapis, which are grappled yard-arm and yard-arm; the latter vessel is severely battered in the sides. The Countess of Scarborough, of 22 guns, the consort of the Serapis, is lying across her bows. Sailors are in the water clinging to floating spars. *Legend.* HOSTIVM NAVIBVS CAPTIS AVT FVGATIS. *Exergue.* AD ORAM SCOTIAE XXIII. SEPT., MDCCLXXVIII. *Dupre, F.* Size 35.

Scarcely had this country settled down into the channels of peace, when once more it was called upon to assert its rights, and this time against a former ally—France. By the French marine ordinance of 26th July, 1778, a passport fully showing the national character of the bearer, is ranked among the proofs of neutrality which cannot be dispensed with in a prize court. In April, 1793, France being then engaged in a maritime war which might give application to the ordinance of 1778, the French minister for foreign affairs announced to Gouverneur Morris, then representing the United States, that M. Genét had been instructed to require of this government, that all American vessels should be “furnished with a passport agreeable to the model annexed to the treaty of 1778,” so as “to prevent all difficulty that might arise in that respect.”

In consequence probably of this representation, Mr. Jefferson arranged the form of a passport in accordance with the treaty, and an executive circular, dated 15th August, 1793, directed every American vessel to be provided with it before leaving this country. Still vessels claiming to be American were frequently found without the passport, and France complained that the American flag was thus permitted to be a cover

for gross evasions of the belligerent rights. In the year 1796, these complaints assumed a sterner form, and were accompanied by a declaration that vessels without a passport would incur the penalty of condemnation as belligerents. From this time France continued to maintain the same doctrine, and to capture and condemn all American vessels that were found on the high seas without the treaty passport. The war of reprisals followed in 1798, and continued till the convention of 1800.

It was for an action which occurred in this last mentioned war, commonly called the *quasi* French war, that Congress awarded by resolution of the 24th of March, 1800, a gold medal to Captain Thomas Truxtun, as gallant an officer as ever walked the quarter-deck, for the action between the American frigate *Constellation* of 38 guns, commanded by Captain Truxtun, and the French frigate *La Vengeance* of 54 guns off Gaudaloupe, on the 1st of February, 1800. The description of the medal is

*Obverse.* Head of Captain Truxtun. *Legend.* PATRIAE PATRES FILIO DIGNO. THOMAS TRUXTUN.

*Reverse.* An engagement between two ships of war; both vessels are much shattered and their rigging much cut. *Legend.* THE UNITED STATES FRIGATE CONSTELLATION, OF THIRTY-EIGHT GUNS, PURSUES, ATTACKS, AND VANQUISHES THE FRENCH SHIP LA VENGEANCE, OF FIFTY-FOUR GUNS, 1ST OF FEB., 1800. *Exergue.* BY VOTE OF CONGRESS TO THOMAS TRUXTUN. 24 MAR., 1800. Size 35.

But a short time elapsed ere the United States was again forced to appeal to arms, and fitted out a squadron against the Algerian pirates on the coast of Barbary. This expedition was brought to a close by the memorable bombardment of Tripoli, on the 3d of August, 1804, an event well known to all readers of history. The fleet was commanded by Commodore Edward Preble, to whom Congress presented a gold medal by vote of March 3, 1805, for his brilliant victory and signal ability in negotiating a treaty of commerce and amity between his own government and that of the Bey of Tunis and Tripoli.



*Obverse.* Bust of Commodore Preble. *Legend.* EDUARDO PREBLE DUCI STRENUO. *Exergue.* COMITIA AMERICANA.

*Reverse.* The American fleet bombarding the town and forts of Tripoli. *Legend.* VINDICI COMMERCII AMERICANI. *Exergue.* ANTE TRIPOLI, MDCCCIV. Size 40.

We now reach the period in our country's history which revealed her as one of the leading maritime powers of the globe. The war of 1812, or second war of American Independence, was mainly caused by the claims of Great Britain to the right of search in times of peace, and the impressment of seamen into their navy from foreign merchantmen, under the pretended theory of non-recognition of the right of expatriation.

The earliest battle of importance in this war, the one which may be said to have fairly opened the ball, was that fought on the 19th of August, 1812, between the United States frigate Constitution, 44 guns, commanded by Isaac Hull, of Philadelphia, and H. B. M. frigate Guerriere, 50 guns, Captain Dacres, in which the latter vessel was captured after an action of thirty minutes, with the loss of seventy-seven men killed and wounded. Congress, on the 29th of January, 1813, passed a resolution presenting to Captain Hull for this victory a gold medal, and to each of the commissioned officers silver ones. Also the same to Captains Jacob Jones and Stephen Decatur, and their commissioned officers, the former for his capture of the English sloop-of-war Frolic, on the 20th of October, and the latter for taking the British frigate Macedonian, 50 guns, by the United States frigate United States, 44 guns, on the 25th of the same month and year.

These medals are Hull's.

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Hull. *Legend.* PERITOS ARTE SUPERAT JUL., MDCCCXII AUG. CERTAMINE FORTES. *Exergue.* ISAACUS HULL.

*Reverse.* The battle between the Constitution and the Guerriere, is represented in that particular and interesting stage when the boarders from the Guerriere were repulsed, and a raking fire from the Constitution had cut away the main and

foremasts of the *Guerriere*, which are falling, leaving the American ship little injured. *Legend.* HORAE MOMENTO VICTORIA. *Exergue.* INTER CONST. NAV. AMER. ET GUER. ANGL. Size 40.

Jones'.

*Obverse.* Head of Captain Jones. *Legend.* IACOBUS JONES VIRTUS IN ARDUA TENDIT. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Two ships closely engaged, the bowsprit of the *Frolic* has run between the main and mizzenmasts of the *Wasp*, and men are just in the act of boarding her from the bow of the *Wasp*; the latter ship has her maintopmast shot away. *Legend.* VICTORIAM HOSTI MAJORI CELERRIME RAPUIT. *Exergue.* INTER WASP NAV. AMERI. ET FBOLIC NAV., ANG. DIE XVIII, OCT., MDCCCXII. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

Decatur's.

*Obverse.* Bust of Commodore Decatur. *Legend.* STEPHANUS DECATUR NAVARCHUS PUGNIS. *Exergue.* PLURIBUS, VICTOR. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The engagement of the two frigates *Macedonia* and *United States*. The topmasts of the former are shot away, while the latter has but a few shots through her sails. *Legend.* OCCIDIT SIGNUM HOSTILE SIDERA SURGUNT. *Exergue.* INTER STA. UNI. NAV. AMERI. ET MACEDO. NAV. ANG. DIE XXV, OCTOBRIS, MDCCCXII. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

The next medal which comes under our notice, was given to one of our own citizens, of whom we have a just right to be proud, and I doubt not but some of the gentlemen before me may well remember him. I refer to Commodore William Bainbridge, whose respected widow, the mother-in-law of our gallant fellow-townsmen, Captain Henry K. Hoff, still lives among us. It was awarded by resolve of Congress approved March 3, 1813, together with fifty thousand dollars to Captain Bainbridge, for his capture of the British frigate *Java*, 50 guns, after a desperate encounter lasting one hour and fifty-five minutes, by the United States frigate *Constitution*, 44 guns, a vessel better known to the present generation by its suitable sobriquet of "Old Ironsides."

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Bainbridge. *Legend.* GULIELMUS BAINBRIDGE PATRIA VICTISQUE LAUDATUS. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The Java is represented with all her masts shot away, only the three stumps remaining above deck. The Constitution on the other hand has but a few rents in her sails. *Legend.* PUGNANDO. *Exergue.* INTER CONST. NAV. AMERI. ET JAV. NAV. ANGL. DIE XXIX DECEM., MDCCCXII. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

This medal was of gold, and silver ones were presented to the commissioned officers serving under him on this occasion.

January 6, 1814, resolutions were passed by Congress awarding gold medals, to the nearest male relative of Lieutenant William Burrows, for the action between the British sloop-of-war Boxer and the American brig Enterprise, in which Lieutenant Burrows, commanding the Enterprise, was killed; to Lieutenant Edward R. McCall, of South Carolina, second in command during the engagement; to Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry, for his celebrated victory obtained upon Lake Erie, September 10, 1813, and to Captain Jesse Duncan Elliott, second in command under Perry; also silver ones to the other commissioned officers who participated in these conflicts.

The Burrows medal has for the

*Obverse.* An urn upon a tomb, surrounded by various military emblems, and a wreath hanging from a trident. The pedestal bears the name W. Burrows. *Legend.* VICTORIAM TIBI CLARAM PATRIÆ MÆSTAM.

*Reverse.* A view of the action between the Enterprise and Boxer, in sight of the coast. The Boxer has her maintopmast shot away. *Legend.* VIVERE SAT VINCERE. *Exergue.* INTER ENTERPRISE NAV. AMERI. ET BOXER NAV. BRIT. DIE IV SEPT., MDCCCXIII. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

The medal to Lieutenant McCall is

*Obverse.* Bust of Lieutenant McCall. *Legend.* EDWARD R. MCCALL, NAVIS ENTERPRISE PRÆFECTUS. *Exergue.* SIC ITUR AD ASTRA. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Same as the last. Size 40.

Of the Lake Erie medals, the one to Perry has, as follows :

*Obverse.* Bust of Commodore Perry. *Legend.* OLIVERUS H. PERRY, PRINCEPS STAGNO ERINSE. *Exergue.* CLASSIM TOTAM CONTUDIT. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The American and British fleet closely engaged. *Legend.* VIAM INVENIT VIRTUS AUT FACIT. *Exergue.* INTER CLASS. AMERI. ET BRIT. DIE X, SEPT., MDCCCXIII. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

The one to Elliott.

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Elliott. *Legend.* JESSE D. ELLIOTT. NIL ACTUM REPUTANS SI QUID. *Exergue.* SUPERESSET AGENDUM. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Same as last. Size 40.

"Don't give up the ship," as is well known, were the last words spoken by Captain James Lawrence aboard the Chesapeake, when he was mortally wounded in the action with the Shannon, June 1, 1813, and which has since become the motto of the American navy. Two months before this memorable order was given, Captain Lawrence captured the English brig Peacock, 22 guns, by the United States war-sloop Hornet, 18 guns, for which service Congress by resolution of January 11, 1814, ordered a gold medal to be struck and presented to his nearest male relative.

*Obverse.* Head of Captain Lawrence. *Legend.* JAC. LAWRENCE. DULCE ET DECORUM EST PRO PATRIA MORI. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The Peacock with her mizzenmast gone is in the act of sinking bow foremost; a boat from her adversary is being rowed towards her. *Legend.* MANSUETUD. MAJ. QUAM VICTORIA. *Exergue.* INTER HORNET, NAV. AMERI. ET PEACOCK, NAV. ANG. DIE XXIV., FEB., MDCCCXIII. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

The commissioned officers of the Hornet received silver medals.

The second decisive naval victory which was gained on one of our great inland seas during this war, was that on the 11th of September, 1814, when Commodore Thomas Macdonough, with a fleet composed of four vessels and ten galleys carrying 86 guns, obtained a brilliant triumph over the British fleet of four vessels and thirteen galleys mounting 95 guns, on Lake Champlain. Gold medals were awarded to Captains Macdonough

and Henley, and to Lieutenant Cassin, commorative of this victory, by resolution of Congress approved October 20, 1814.

Commodore Macdonough's medal has on the

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Macdonough. *Legend.* THO. MACDONOUGH. STAGNO CHAMPLAIN CLAS. REG. BRIT. *Exergue.* SUPERAVIT. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Represents the engagement between the American and British fleets; several boats rowed by sailors are upon the lake; to the right Plattsburg is seen in flames. *Legend.* UNO LATERE PERCUSSO. ALTERUM IMPAVIDE VERTIT. *Exergue.* INTER CLASS. AMERI. ET BRIT. DIE XI, SEPT., MDCCCXIII. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

Captain Henley's.

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Henley. *Legend.* ROB. HENLEY EAGLE PRÆFECT. PALMA VIRTU. PER ÆTERNIT. FLOREBIT.

*Reverse.* Same as Macdonough's. Size 40.

Lieutenant Cassin's.

*Obverse.* Bust of Lieutenant Cassin. *Legend.* STEP. CASSIN, TICONDEROGA PRÆFECT. QUÆ REGIO IN TERRIS NOS. *Exergue.* NON PLENA LAB. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Like the two last. Size 40.

Silver medals were awarded also to the commissioned officers of the American fleet, to the officers of the army serving in it during the contest, and to the nearest male relatives of Lieutenants Gamble and Stansbury, killed in the action.

The day succeeding the one on which were approved the resolutions presenting the three Champlain medals, Congress was again called upon to show its appreciation of native valor by ordering to be presented a gold medal to Captain Lewis Warrington, of Virginia, in honor of his victory over the English brig-of-war Epervier, on the 29th of April, 1814.

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Warrington. *Legend.* LUDOVICUS WARRINGTON, DUX NAVALIS AMERI. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The engagement between the two vessels, the Epervier has her guns silenced and her topmasts shot away. *Legend.* PRO PATRIA PARATUS AUT VINCERE AUT MORI. *Exergue.* INTER PEACOCK NAV. AMERI. ET EPÉRVIE. NAV. ANG. DIE XXIX, MAR., MDCCCXIV. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

The date on the medal is undoubtedly an error by the die sinker, as the action did not take place until one month later, according to Captain Warrington's official letter to the Navy Department dated, "At sea April 29, 1814," and commencing, "We have this morning captured, after an action of forty-two minutes, his Majesty's brig Epervier \* \* \* &c."

For the capture, on the 28th of June, 1814, after an action of twenty-eight minutes duration, by the United States sloop-of-war Wasp, of the British ship Reindeer, Captain Manners, a gold medal was awarded by resolution of Congress, dated November 3, 1814, to Captain Johnston Blakeley, who commanded the Wasp.

*Obverse.* Head of Captain Blakeley. *Legend.* JOHNSTON BLAKELEY, REIP. FÆD. AM. NAV. WASP DUX. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* A view of the engagement between the two vessels. The Reindeer's guns are silenced, and her colors pulled down in token of surrender. *Legend.* EHEU! BIS VICTOR PATRIA TUA TE LUGET PLAUDITQ. *Exergue.* INTER WASP NAV. AMERI. ET REINDEER NAV. ANG. DIE XXVIII JUNIUS MDCCCXIV. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

After the capture of the Reindeer, Captain Blakeley continued his cruise, and subsequently took the British sloop-of-war Avon, 20 guns, and brig Atalanta, the last on the 23d of September, 1814. On the 4th of the following October, the Wasp was spoken in latitude 18° 35' N., longitude 30° 10' W., from which time to this nothing has ever been heard of her. It is to this sad fate of Captain Blakeley that reference is made in the legend on the reverse of the foregoing medal.

We must now leave our naval patriots to return once more to our heroes on the land, whose engagements during the War of 1812-15, though not so brilliant and fortunate as their brethren of the sea, tended in a large degree to the successful termination of that series of conflicts which spread over the intervening time between the two last mentioned years.

On November 3, 1814, Congress passed a general resolution presenting gold medals to Generals Winfield Scott, Edmund Pendleton Gaines, Peter B. Porter, Jacob Brown,

James Miller, Eleazer W. Ripley and Alexander Macomb, in testimony of the high sense and appreciation entertained by that body, for their distinguished and meritorious services at the battles of Chippewa, Niagara, Erie and Plattsburg.

General Scott's for the battles of Chippewa and Niagara, has for the

*Obverse.* Bust of General Scott. *Legend.* MAJOR-GENERAL WINFIELD SCOTT. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* A snake entwined by a wreath of laurel and palm. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, NOVEMBER 3, 1814. BATTLES OF CHIPPEWA, JULY 5, 1814: NIAGARA, JULY 25, 1814. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

General Gaines', for his gallant defence of Fort Erie on the occasion of its attack by the British forces under General Drummond, on the 15th of August, 1814, has on the

*Obverse.* Head of General Gaines. *Legend.* MAJOR-GENERAL EDMUND P. GAINES. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Victory standing upon a shield under which are a sword, musket, halberd and balls, and holding a palm branch in her left hand, is in the act of placing with her right hand a laurel crown upon the cascabel of a cannon, which is fixed upright in the ground with a scroll running round it, bearing the inscription "ERIE." Against one trunion rests a stand of British colors, and from the other is suspended a broadsword. On the ground to the right are a howitzer, helmet, and balls, trophies of victory, while behind the cannon is a helmet. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, NOVEMBER 3, 1814. *Exergue.* BATTLE OF ERIE, AUGUST 15, 1814. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

General Porter's, commemorative of all three battles, has for its

*Obverse.* Bust of General Porter. *Legend.* MAJOR-GENERAL PETER B. PORTER. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Victory standing, bears in her right hand a laurel wreath and palm branch, and in her left she holds out three flags, inscribed severally, CHIPPEWA, NIAGARA, ERIE; the Muse of History, seated before her, is recording the victories at these

places. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, NOV. 3, 1814. *Exergue.* BATTLES OF CHIPPEWA, JULY 5, 1814; NIAGARA, JULY 25, 1814; ERIE, SEPT. 17, 1814. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

It may be well to account for the disparity in dates between the Gaines and Porter medals of the battle of Erie, by stating that there were a series of conflicts between the two forces, commencing about the 4th of August and extending until the 17th of September, when the enemy were completely routed by the American forces under General Jacob Brown. On the 15th of August, the enemy were first repulsed at Fort Erie, by General Gaines.

General Brown's for the same.

*Obverse.* Head of General Brown. *Legend.* MAJOR-GENERAL JACOB BROWN. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The Roman fasces indicative of the union and strength of the States, surrounded upon both sides by stands of British colors, swords, muskets, and other military emblems, and from the top hangs a wreath of laurel, from which are suspended three tablets, bearing the inscription, NIAGARA, ERIE. CHIPPEWA; and in front at its base the American eagle is standing upon the British flag. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, NOV. 3, 1814. *Exergue.* BATTLES OF CHIPPEWA, JULY 5, 1814; NIAGARA, JULY 25, 1814; ERIE, SEPT. 17, 1814. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

Miller's for the same, as follows:

*Obverse.* Bust of General Miller. *Legend.* BRIGADIER-GENERAL JAMES MILLER. *Exergue.* I'LL TRY. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Two armies engaged upon a hill. One party is charging the other to obtain possession of a battery. On the plain below in the left background, a camp is seen with a body of men drawn up in reserve, and in the foreground is a park of artillery, drawn by four horses, with men riding on the trucks. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, NOV. 3, 1814. *Exergue.* BATTLES OF CHIPPEWA, JULY 5, 1814; NIAGARA, JULY 25, 1814; ERIE, SEPT. 17, 1814. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

Ripley's for the same has

*Obverse.* Head of General Ripley. *Legend.* BRIGADIER-GENERAL ELEAZER W. RIPLEY. *Furst, F.*



*Reverse.* Fame is represented hanging upon the branches of a palm tree, a tablet bearing the inscriptions CHIPPEWA, NIAGARA, ERIE. In her right hand, which hangs gracefully by her side, she carries her trumpet and a wreath of laurel, the latter encircling the former. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, NOV. 3, 1814. *Exergue.* BATTLES OF CHIPPEWA, JULY 5, 1814; NIAGARA, JULY 25, 1814; ERIE, AUG. 15, SEPT. 17, 1814. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

The seventh and last medal awarded under the resolve of the 3d November, 1814, was to General Alexander Macomb for his gallant conduct at the battle of Plattsburg, on the occasion of its attack by the English army, September 11, 1814.

*Obverse.* Bust of General Macomb. *Legend.* MAJOR-GENERAL ALEXANDER MACOMB. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* A view of the battle of Plattsburg. In the left background vessels of war are seen upon Lake Champlain in action, and beyond in the right background, mountains are visible. In the left foreground, troops are crossing a bridge, planted at the head of which is the American standard. Plattsburg in view to the left in flames. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, NOV. 3, 1814. *Exergue.* BATTLE OF PLATTSBURG, SEPT. 11, 1814. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

On the 8th of January, 1815, was fought the only battle on American soil the anniversary of which is sacredly remembered and rigidly celebrated all over the Union. Congress on the 27th of the following February, voted a gold medal to General Jackson for his brave and successful repulse of the enemy under General Sir Edward Packinham, in their attack upon New Orleans.

*Obverse.* Bust of General Jackson. *Legend.* MAJOR-GENERAL ANDREW JACKSON. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* Victory seated, and supporting a tablet before her with her left hand, which also holds a laurel wreath and from which has fallen a palm branch, has commenced recording the glorious victory of the 8th of January, and has headed the tablet with the word Orleans, but is interrupted by a female personifying Peace, who holds an olive branch in her right hand

and with her left points to the tablet, as if directing Victory to record the peace between the United States and Great Britain. Victory is in the act of turning round to listen to her instructions. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, FEB. 27, 1815. *Exergue.* BATTLE OF NEW ORLEANS, JANUARY, 8, 1815. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

I must revert once more to those sons of Neptune who upheld so valiantly the honor of our flag in the last war with England, and whose brave spirit has descended untarnished to their successors of the present day, and this time to record honor done to two citizens of Philadelphia, one still living and the hero of decidedly the most brilliant engagement of the war. Captain Charles Stewart, on the 20th of February, 1815, captured, after a most skillful combat lasting only forty minutes, the two British war vessels *Cyane* of 34 guns, and *Levant* of 21 guns, with the frigate *Constitution*, 52 guns. Considering the superior weight of the enemy's metal, and their forces being divided, this may be deemed the most noteworthy naval action of modern days. One year later, Congress on the 22d of February passed complimentary resolutions to Commodore Stewart and the officers and crew under his command, and ordered a gold medal to be presented to him, and silver ones to his officers, commemorative of the victory. By resolution of the same date, a gold medal was awarded to Captain James Biddle, for his capture of the English man-of-war *Penguin*, on the 23d of March, 1815. Silver ones were also in this instance presented to his commissioned officers.

Commodore Stewart's medal has

*Obverse.* Bust of Captain Stewart. *Legend.* CAROLUS STEWART NAVIS AMER. CONSTITUTION. DUX. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* View of the engagement taking place between the *Constitution* and the *Cyane* and *Levant*. The two latter occupy respectively the right and left foreground, and in the centre of the background between them, is the *Constitution*. *Legend.* UNA VICTORIAM ERIPUIT RATIBUS BINIS. *Exergue.* INTER CONSTITU. NAV. AMERI. ET LEVANT ET CYANE NAV. ANG. DIE XX FEBR., MDCCCXV. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

Commodore Biddle's.

*Obverse.* Head of Captain Biddle. *Legend.* THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES TO CAPTAIN JAMES BIDDLE. *Exergue.* FOR HIS GALLANTRY, GOOD CONDUCT, AND SERVICES. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The engagement between the Hornet and the Penguin, in sight of the peak of Tristan d' Acunha ; the Penguin is very much injured in her upper rigging, her guns are silenced, and her colors are trailing in the water over her stern. *Legend.* CAPTURE OF THE BRITISH SHIP PENGUIN, BY THE UNITED STATES SHIP HORNET. *Exergue.* OFF TRISTAN D' ACUNHA, MARCH XXIII, MDCCCXV. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

Congress while awarding our commanders on the sea did not entirely overlook the just claims of the leaders of our land forces, for, although after some delay, they did justice to General William Henry Harrison and Governor Isaac Shelby for their distinguished victory over the combined English and Indian forces at the battle of the Thames, on the 5th of October, 1813. By resolution of April 4, 1818, gold medals were ordered to be presented to these two gentlemen, for the above last mentioned action.

The medal to President Harrison has on its

*Obverse.* Bust of General Harrison. *Legend.* MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM H. HARRISON. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* A female placing a wreath around two bayonets fixed on muskets, and a color staff stacked, over a drum and a cannon, a bow and a quiver ; with her right hand she holds a halberd and rests upon an American shield. From the point of union of the stack hangs a badge with the inscription, Fort Meigs, Battle of the Thames. *Legend.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, APRIL 4, 1818. *Exergue.* BATTLE OF THE THAMES, OCTOBER 5, 1813. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

Governor Shelby's medal has

*Obverse.* Bust of Governor Shelby. *Legend.* GOVERNOR ISAAC SHELBY, *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The battle, with the Indian force drawn up upon the edge of the wood in the right background. On the left background the American troops have broken the Indian line,

and on the left foreground a body of American infantry are seen advancing to the attack. In the foreground, on the right, Governor Shelby is charging the enemy at the head of his mounted rangers; and in the centre, on the open space between the opposing columns, the principal event of the action is represented—the death of the great Tecumseh at the hands of Colonel Richard M. Johnson, afterwards Vice-President of the United States. *Legend.* BATTLE OF THE THAMES, OCTOBER 5, 1813. *Exergue.* RESOLUTION OF CONGRESS, APRIL 4, 1818. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

I will close this notice of our National Medals which has spread under my pen to a much greater length than I at first intended or supposed, with the record that twenty-one years after the signing of the Treaty of Ghent, Congress was taken with one of those spasmodic affections by which sluggish bodies are sometimes singularly moved, and on the 13th of February, 1835, passed a vote awarding to Colonel George Croghan a gold medal for his gallant defence of Fort Sandusky, on the 2d of August, 1813, against the attack of a vastly superior force of five hundred British regulars and eight hundred Indians, commanded by General Proctor.

*Obverse.* Bust of Colonel Croghan. *Legend.* PRESENTED BY CONGRESS TO COLONEL GEORGE CROGHAN. *Exergue.* 1835. *Furst, F.*

*Reverse.* The fort of Sandusky with the enemy arranged in front, and the flag flying on the tower; on the bay in the background are seen three vessels. *Legend.* PARS MAGNA FUIT. *Exergue.* SANDUSKY, 2D: AUGUST, 1813. *Furst, F.* Size 40.

I hope the gentlemen who have so kindly been my audience during the reading of this dry compilation of facts, and imperfect descriptions of the only monuments erected in honor of the great battles of our country, both on sea and on land, and of their heroes, will see the propriety of urging upon the Federal Government their attention to the correction of our coinage, somewhat on the plan laid before them in the petition of this Society, presented by our Honorary Vice-President, Mr. Johnson, at the last session of Congress, so that our coinage may

become the repository of the country's history, and then when the avenging hand of time has swept into eternity all other records, these little pieces of metal may become to future ages what the coins of ancient Greece and Rome are to us, the historians of the long forgotten past.





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